



**For Release: Thursday, May 04, 2017**

**17-563-DAL**

SOUTHWEST INFORMATION OFFICE: Dallas, Texas

Technical information: (972) 850-4800 BLSInfoDallas@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southwest

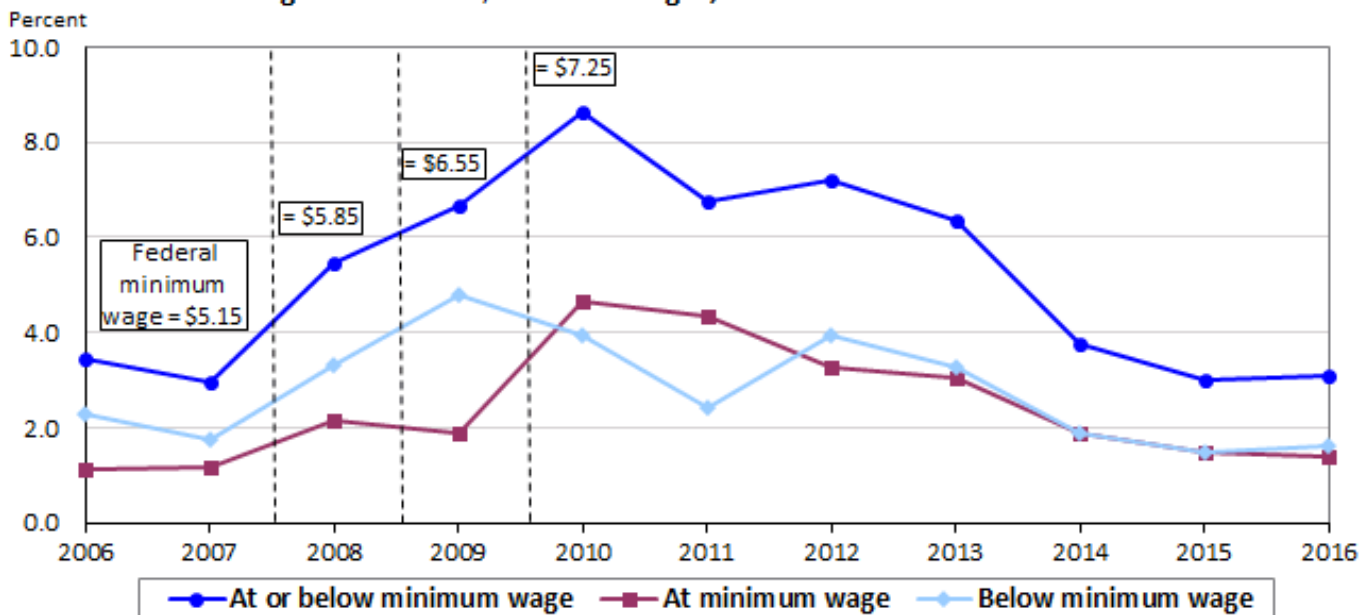
Media contact: (972) 850-4800

## Minimum Wage Workers in Oklahoma – 2016

Of the 894,000 workers paid hourly rates in Oklahoma in 2016, 13,000 earned exactly the prevailing federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, while 14,000 earned less, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that the 27,000 workers earning the federal minimum wage or less made up 3.1 percent of all hourly paid workers in the state. Nationwide, those earning the federal minimum or less accounted for 2.7 percent of the hourly paid workforce. (See [table 1](#). The Oklahoma minimum wage is equal to the prevailing federal minimum wage.)

In 2007, 25,000 hourly paid workers earned the prevailing federal minimum wage or less in Oklahoma, the lowest level since data were first available in 2000. The 25,000 workers in this category accounted for 2.9 percent of all hourly paid workers in the state. (See [chart 1](#).) It was also in 2007 that the federal minimum wage began increasing after holding steady for nearly a decade. Two additional increases in the federal minimum wage followed, resulting in more Oklahoma workers falling into this category and peaking at 72,000 in 2010. However, the number of Oklahoma workers earning the federal minimum wage or less has fallen in each of the past 4 years.

**Chart 1. Percentage of hourly paid wage and salary workers with earnings at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage in Oklahoma, annual averages, 2006-2016**



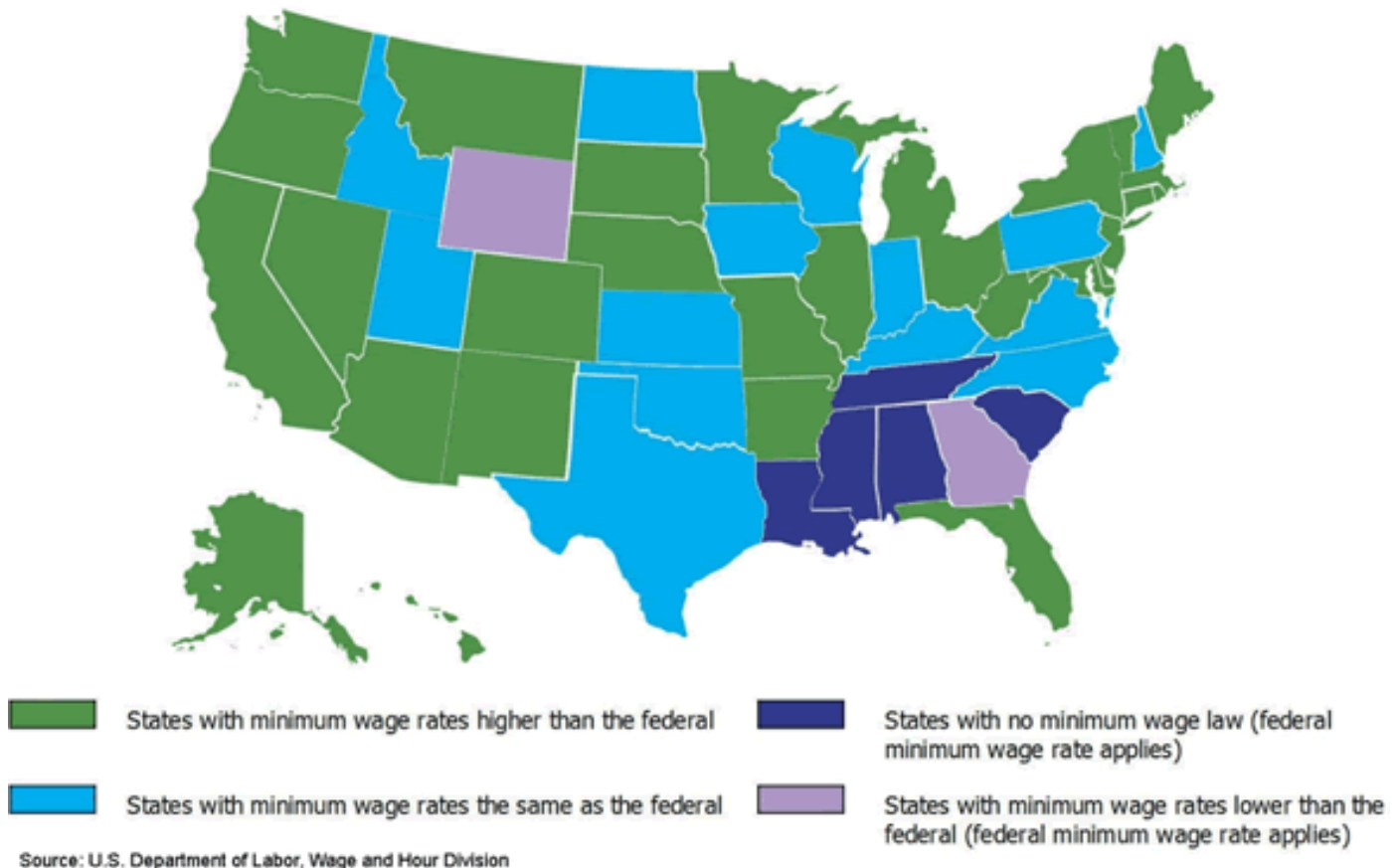
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

At 3.1 percent in 2016, the proportion of hourly paid workers in Oklahoma who earned at or below the federal minimum wage was little changed from 2015. Similarly, the percentages of workers earning exactly the federal minimum wage in 2016 (1.4 percent) and those earning less than the minimum wage (1.6 percent) were essentially unchanged from a year ago.

Of the 27,000 workers earning the prevailing federal minimum wage or less in Oklahoma in 2016, 18,000 were women, accounting for 66.7 percent, or two-thirds, of all workers making the minimum wage or less. These women represented 4.2 percent of all women paid hourly rates in the state. The approximately 10,000 male workers earning the prevailing minimum wage or less accounted for about one-third of all minimum wage workers in Oklahoma; they made up 2.2 percent of all men in the state who were paid hourly rates. (See [table 2.](#))

In 2016, the states with the highest percentages of hourly paid workers earning at or below the federal minimum wage were Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina (all were at or about 5 percent). The states with the lowest percentages of hourly paid workers earning at or below the federal minimum wage were in the West: Alaska, California, and Oregon (all were 1 percent or less). It should be noted that many states have minimum wage laws establishing standards that exceed the federal minimum wage. As of January 1, 2017, 29 states and the District of Columbia had minimum wage rates that exceeded the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. (See [table 1](#) and [chart 2.](#))

**Chart 2. Minimum wages laws in the states, January 1, 2017**



## Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment. The survey is conducted monthly for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau using a scientifically selected national sample of about 60,000 eligible households in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The survey also provides data on earnings, which are based on one-fourth of the CPS monthly sample and are limited to wage and salary workers. All self-employed workers, both incorporated and unincorporated, are excluded from these earnings estimates.

Statistics based on the CPS are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. The differences among data for the states reflect, in part, variations in the occupation, industry, and age composition of each state's labor force. In addition, sampling error for the state estimates is considerably larger than it is for the national data.

Minimum wage worker data, particularly levels, for each year are not strictly comparable with data for earlier years because of the introduction of revised population controls used in the CPS. For technical documentation and related information, including reliability of the CPS estimates, see [www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm).

Some workers reported as earning at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage may not, in fact, be covered by federal or state minimum wage laws because of exclusions and exemptions in the statutes. The presence of workers with hourly earnings below the federal minimum wage does not necessarily indicate violations of the FLSA or state statutes in cases where such standards apply.

Estimates of the number of minimum wage workers in this release pertain only to workers who are paid hourly rates. Salaried workers and other workers who are not paid by the hour are excluded, even though some have earnings that, if converted to hourly rates, would be at or below the federal minimum wage. Consequently, the estimates presented in this release likely understate the actual number of workers with hourly earnings at or below the minimum wage.

The prevailing federal minimum wage was \$2.90 in 1979, \$3.10 in 1980, and \$3.35 in 1981-89. The minimum wage rose to \$3.80 in April 1990, \$4.25 in April 1991, \$4.75 in October 1996, and \$5.15 in September 1997. On July 24, 2007, the federal minimum wage increased to \$5.85 per hour; on July 24, 2008, to \$6.55 per hour; and on July 24, 2009, to \$7.25 per hour.

The principal definitions for the main concepts presented in this report are below.

*Wage and salary workers.* Workers age 16 and older who receive wages, salaries, commissions, tips, payments in kind, or piece rates on their sole or principal job. This group includes employees in both the private and public sectors. All self-employed workers are excluded whether or not their businesses are incorporated.

*Workers paid at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage* pertain only to workers who are paid hourly rates. Salaried workers and other nonhourly paid workers are excluded.

*Hourly earnings.* Hourly earnings data are for wage and salary workers who are paid by the hour and refer to a person's sole or principal job. Hourly earnings for hourly paid workers do not include overtime pay, commissions, or tips received.

*Median hourly earnings.* The median is the amount which divides a given earnings distribution into two equal groups, one having earnings above the median and the other having earnings below the median. The median is less sensitive to extreme wages than the mean; this makes it a better measure for highly skewed distributions.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

**Table 1. Wage and salary workers paid hourly rates with earnings at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage, by state, 2016 annual averages**

State	Number of workers (in thousands)				Percent distribution				Percentage of workers paid hourly rates		
	Total paid hourly rates	At or below minimum wage			Total paid hourly rates	At or below minimum wage			At or below minimum wage		
		Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage		Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage	Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage
Total, 16 years and older .....	79,883	2,153	701	1,451	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	2.7	0.9	1.8
Alabama .....	1,222	43	20	23	1.5	2.0	2.9	1.6	3.5	1.7	1.9
Alaska .....	199	1	1	1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.7	0.3	0.4
Arizona .....	1,653	39	6	34	2.1	1.8	0.9	2.3	2.4	0.4	2.0
Arkansas .....	724	19	6	13	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	2.6	0.8	1.8
California .....	9,669	99	24	75	12.1	4.6	3.4	5.1	1.0	0.2	0.8
Colorado .....	1,318	30	4	26	1.7	1.4	0.5	1.8	2.3	0.3	2.0
Connecticut .....	915	18	3	15	1.1	0.8	0.4	1.0	1.9	0.3	1.7
Delaware .....	232	5	1	4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	2.3	0.5	1.8
District of Columbia .....	111	3	0	2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	2.4	0.1	2.2
Florida .....	4,502	132	20	113	5.6	6.2	2.8	7.8	2.9	0.4	2.5
Georgia .....	2,318	90	39	51	2.9	4.2	5.5	3.5	3.9	1.7	2.2
Hawaii .....	363	5	1	4	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.3	1.3	0.3	1.1
Idaho .....	458	21	10	11	0.6	1.0	1.4	0.8	4.6	2.1	2.5
Illinois .....	3,107	76	19	57	3.9	3.5	2.7	3.9	2.4	0.6	1.8
Indiana .....	1,899	69	32	37	2.4	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.7	1.7	2.0
Iowa .....	981	24	10	13	1.2	1.1	1.5	0.9	2.4	1.0	1.4
Kansas .....	815	36	14	22	1.0	1.7	2.0	1.5	4.4	1.7	2.7
Kentucky .....	1,068	51	23	28	1.3	2.4	3.3	2.0	4.8	2.2	2.7
Louisiana .....	1,095	58	27	31	1.4	2.7	3.8	2.1	5.3	2.4	2.8
Maine .....	363	10	2	8	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.5	2.7	0.5	2.2
Maryland .....	1,449	30	6	25	1.8	1.4	0.8	1.7	2.1	0.4	1.7
Massachusetts ..	1,650	29	5	24	2.1	1.4	0.7	1.7	1.8	0.3	1.5
Michigan .....	2,800	56	8	49	3.5	2.6	1.1	3.4	2.0	0.3	1.7
Minnesota .....	1,547	18	6	12	1.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	1.2	0.4	0.8
Mississippi .....	710	34	15	20	0.9	1.6	2.1	1.4	4.8	2.1	2.8
Missouri .....	1,708	46	6	40	2.1	2.1	0.9	2.8	2.7	0.4	2.3
Montana .....	294	4	1	3	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.2	1.2	0.3	1.0
Nebraska .....	537	10	1	9	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.6	1.9	0.2	1.7
Nevada .....	807	10	6	5	1.0	0.5	0.8	0.3	1.3	0.7	0.6
New Hampshire ..	398	15	3	12	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.8	3.8	0.8	3.0
New Jersey .....	1,855	48	9	38	2.3	2.2	1.3	2.6	2.6	0.5	2.1
New Mexico .....	512	14	2	12	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.9	2.7	0.3	2.4
New York .....	4,180	82	15	66	5.2	3.8	2.2	4.6	2.0	0.4	1.6
North Carolina ...	2,522	91	38	52	3.2	4.2	5.5	3.6	3.6	1.5	2.1
North Dakota .....	241	4	1	3	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	1.6	0.3	1.3
Ohio .....	3,327	75	15	60	4.2	3.5	2.2	4.1	2.3	0.5	1.8
Oklahoma .....	894	27	13	14	1.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	3.1	1.4	1.6
Oregon .....	1,059	10	0	10	1.3	0.5	0.0	0.7	1.0	0.0	1.0
Pennsylvania .....	3,516	144	73	71	4.4	6.7	10.4	4.9	4.1	2.1	2.0

**Table 1. Wage and salary workers paid hourly rates with earnings at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage, by state, 2016 annual averages - Continued**

State	Number of workers (in thousands)				Percent distribution				Percentage of workers paid hourly rates		
	Total paid hourly rates	At or below minimum wage			Total paid hourly rates	At or below minimum wage			At or below minimum wage		
		Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage		Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage	Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage
Rhode Island .....	312	8	1	7	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.5	2.7	0.4	2.3
South Carolina...	1,151	57	19	38	1.4	2.7	2.7	2.7	5.0	1.6	3.3
South Dakota.....	256	4	1	3	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	1.6	0.4	1.2
Tennessee .....	1,724	67	31	36	2.2	3.1	4.4	2.5	3.9	1.8	2.1
Texas .....	6,188	242	100	141	7.7	11.2	14.3	9.7	3.9	1.6	2.3
Utah .....	840	23	10	13	1.1	1.1	1.4	0.9	2.7	1.1	1.6
Vermont .....	184	5	1	4	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3	2.5	0.5	2.0
Virginia .....	1,957	83	26	57	2.4	3.9	3.8	3.9	4.3	1.4	2.9
Washington .....	1,853	25	8	18	2.3	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.4	0.4	1.0
West Virginia .....	433	10	2	7	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.5	2.2	0.6	1.7
Wisconsin .....	1,802	46	18	28	2.3	2.1	2.5	1.9	2.6	1.0	1.6
Wyoming .....	163	4	1	3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	2.5	0.7	1.8

Note: Data exclude all self-employed persons, whether or not their businesses are incorporated. These data are based on a sample and therefore are subject to sampling error; the degree of error may be quite large for less populous states. Unrounded data were used in all calculations.

**Table 2. Employed wage and salary workers paid hourly rates with earnings at or below the prevailing federal minimum wage and median earnings of hourly paid workers in Oklahoma, by gender, annual averages, 2006-2016**

Year	Number of workers (in thousands)				Percentage of workers paid hourly rates			Median earnings (in dollars)
	Total paid hourly rates	At or below minimum wage			At or below minimum wage			
		Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage	Total	At minimum wage	Below minimum wage	
Men .....								
2006 ...	433	9	5	4	2.1	1.2	0.9	\$11.89
2007 ...	435	8	4	4	1.8	0.9	0.9	12.18
2008 ...	458	16	5	11	3.5	1.1	2.4	12.72
2009 ...	425	21	6	15	4.9	1.4	3.5	12.16
2010 ...	413	29	14	15	7.0	3.4	3.6	13.96
2011....	444	24	15	9	5.4	3.4	2.0	13.15
2012 ...	465	27	12	15	5.8	2.6	3.2	13.48
2013 ...	492	23	13	10	4.7	2.6	2.0	14.18
2014 ...	468	14	5	9	3.0	1.1	1.9	14.81
2015 ...	494	5	3	2	1.0	0.6	0.4	14.92
2016 ...	462	10	5	5	2.2	1.1	1.1	14.45
Women ...								
2006 ...	436	21	5	16	4.8	1.1	3.7	\$9.72
2007 ...	414	17	7	10	4.1	1.7	2.4	9.90
2008 ...	419	32	14	18	7.6	3.3	4.3	10.10
2009 ...	427	37	10	27	8.7	2.3	6.3	10.85
2010 ...	422	43	25	18	10.2	5.9	4.3	10.47
2011....	384	31	20	11	8.1	5.2	2.9	10.86
2012 ...	425	37	18	19	8.7	4.2	4.5	11.00
2013 ...	455	36	15	21	7.9	3.3	4.6	11.14
2014 ...	432	21	13	8	4.9	3.0	1.9	12.05
2015 ...	473	24	11	13	5.1	2.3	2.7	11.93
2016 ...	432	18	8	10	4.2	1.9	2.3	12.30

Note: Data exclude all self-employed persons whether or not their businesses are incorporated. Data for 2007–2009 reflect changes in the minimum wage that took place in those years.

